/17 cont./
published data. (1)

1. Madame Hadjimichali: Ibid., p.

and on information furnished by the Services of the Hellenic State.

Thus, there is evidence that:

--The birth rate is very high among the Sarakatsani. Their families are very large, and the number of children that play around the huts is considerable. "It is the children that make up true wealth," the Sarakatsani say; they also maintain that number of boys is of greater importance to them than the number of girls. This statement is based on the fact that children of the female sex are not preferred and it is what they all believe, but it--is false. If it were true, the Sarakatsani would have difficulty marrying, since they practice endogamy; as a general rule they marry only Sarakatsani.

Now, there is no shortage of girls to marry in spite of information to the contrary furnished by B. Skafidas. (2)

2. Oi Sarakatsanaioi, p. 362.

In taking a census of married women within the limits of two large Sarakatsani groups (at Tchoucalades very near Mt. Parnassus, and at Plaka near Lamia) who, significantly enough, were in the process of transition towards the sedentary life, we had occasion to /18/ confirm that non-Sarakatsani women represented a minute proportion (about 1.5%).

--Mortality is apparently low. It is the common belief among the Sarakatsani as well as among the peasants surrounding them that longevity is the rule among them.

This belief seems justified. The local health services of the Hellenic state, established in different localities visited by Sarakatsani, told us that mortality really is very low. Moreover, a visit to the Sarakatsani cemetery at Tchoucalades gave us the opportunity to ascertain that the average age of the deceased inscribed on the tombstones exceeded 70 years. Obviously, since there are no civil state registers among them (3) one may question whether these figures are very accurate.